



TOWN OF WARRENTON

POLICE DEPARTMENT



PRESS RELEASE

Incidents of fraud are on the rise again, particularly telemarketing fraud, as seems to always happen at this time of year. Telemarketing fraud is characterized by unsolicited calls in which the caller attempts to convince the person called that a particular service is needed, a bill or payment is due, or an individual the caller knows is in need of money. The caller always tries to convince the person called that they must act immediately or bad things will happen. The number of fraud scenarios is endless and the callers can be very convincing. Some of the most popular telemarketing scams are:

- The caller claims to be a police officer, lawyer, or other authority figure stating a member of the family of the person called is in trouble in a foreign country and needs money
- The caller claims to be from a company, such as the IRS or the power company, and states that the person called owes money and adverse legal action will occur if not paid immediately
- The caller claims to be from Microsoft or some other computer company and states that the computer belonging to the person called either has a virus or needs a software upgrade immediately
- The caller claims that the person called won a lottery, sweepstakes, vacation, or other type of prize and must pay taxes or other fees before the prize can be sent to them

On Tuesday, June 28th the Warrenton Police Department received three new complaints of telemarketing fraud. In the first instance the victim paid \$500 to a caller claiming to be from Microsoft after he said the victim's personal computer software license needed renewal. Operating system licenses do not require renewal once purchased.

In the second instance the victim paid \$1,000 in order to obtain a \$10,000 loan from a person who called claiming to be from a loan agency. The victim also gave out personal information such as social security number and banking information. This could potentially lead to further fraud activity.

In the third instance the police department provided information to a citizen requesting to know about scams. The citizen had been called several times recently by persons attempting to obtain money from them using various stories.

Under no circumstances should you provide your date of birth, social security number, banking account numbers, or any other personal information if requested. Instead you should immediately hang up the phone and call the Warrenton Police Department non-emergency number of 540-347-1100.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation provides useful information regarding all types of common fraud schemes, including telemarketing fraud, at the following website: <https://www.fbi.gov/scams-safety/fraud>.

Anyone who believes they may have been a victim of fraud should report the incident to the FBI, via the website contained in the link above, and to their local law enforcement agency. Anyone with questions

about fraud or this release should contact Sergeant Tim Carter of the Warrenton Police Department at 540-347-1107 ext. 224 or tcarter@warrentonva.gov.

Louis Battle
Chief of Police